

**Written Testimony for Peter Cristiano, M.D.
Re: House Bill #2211**

I have been the physician of Ella Alene Wilson for several years. It is my opinion that the failure of Leavenworth County EMS to transport Alene on November 23, 2003 to the hospital for urgent care, drastically reduced her chances of survival from this major injury. It contributed to her final demise 14 days after Alene's family asked LV CO EMS to honor a Durable Power of Attorney document and transport Alene so she could receive emergency care.

When she came to my office on November 24, 2003, she was in severe pain. It had been approximately 16 hours since she had fallen at home and fractured her leg. Her blood pressure was markedly elevated which indicated something severe was happening. She was in excruciating pain and traumatized by the long delay in receiving medical care for very severe injuries. She was noted then of having hallucinations and suffering from dementia. The rest of her hospital course is well documented in the charts from St. John's Hospital in Leavenworth.

She needed immediate surgery, but could not be a successful candidate until her blood pressure reduced to normal range. The added delay of surgical treatment for the fracture, combined with constant pain, and severe high blood pressure placed a further burden on the patient's already weakened medical condition. This type of delay can precipitate shock.

There are several options the crew should have considered rather than abandoning her at home without further concerns for her welfare. In a physical and mental trauma, pain causes people not to think right. The paramedics should have tried to convince her, not just for an hour, but for however long it took. They could have called me. I could have confirmed her history of dementia, and given them approval to transport.

When they were asking Alene questions, they should have asked themselves a couple key questions. First, is this person rational? Secondly, isn't it irrational to think that a person with a broken hip doesn't want attention given to it -- especially when they're in extreme pain? There is a simple common sense answer to what LV CO EMS should have done that day. If you're walking down the street and you come across someone lying on the ground, immobile and in pain -- what do you do? What would any good Samaritan, let alone a medical professional, someone dedicated to helping people, do in that situation? You have an obligation to see to that patient. You do the right thing. Leaving is just not acceptable.

Bill 2211 requires all EMS to read legal documents they are presented with on scene and respond appropriately. The paramedic and the EMT that day should have read the DPOA, honored the family's wishes and transported Alene for urgent care. They didn't though. That's why Bill 2211 needs approval to clarify this situation and prevent future cases.

